

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 40

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 80

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 40—Relative to Korean War Armistice Day.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 20, 2013.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 40, Hueso. Korean War Armistice Day.

This measure would proclaim July 27, 2013, as Korean War Armistice Day. It would urge Californians to observe the anniversary and call upon them to honor and give thanks to Korean War veterans. It would also urge Governor Jerry Brown to proclaim July 27, 2013, as Korean War Armistice Day and instruct all state departments, agencies, interest groups, organizations, and individuals to fly the United States flag at half-mast on July 27, 2013, in memory of veterans from this state who died as a result of their service in Korea.

WHEREAS, The peoples of the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the State of California have maintained close ties since September 9, 1945, when Colonel Roy A. Green, a Sacramentan commanding the California National Guard’s 184th Infantry Regiment (2nd California Infantry) accepted the surrender of Imperial Japanese forces south of the 38th parallel; and

WHEREAS, On June 25, 1950, the ROK was attacked by the armed forces of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK); and

WHEREAS, On June 30, 1950, President Harry S. Truman authorized elements of the United States Army’s 24th Division stationed in Japan to intervene in the invasion of the ROK, a move that resulted in the near destruction of Task Force Smith, a reinforced infantry battalion comprised of fewer than 500 personnel; and

WHEREAS, On June 29, Seoul, the capital of the ROK, fell for the first time, with those ROK forces north of the Han River being captured or killed; and

WHEREAS, The first major battle between American and DPRK forces at Taejon resulted in the 24th Infantry Division experiencing heavy losses, including its division commander, a Berkeley resident, University of California graduate, and former member of the California National Guard, Major General William F. Dean, who was captured by the DPRK, but not before he displayed personal heroism, including destroying a DPRK tank with a “bazooka,” leading to his award of the Medal of Honor following his release in 1953; and

WHEREAS, After being pushed into a small perimeter around the port city of Pusan located at the southeastern tip of the Korean peninsula, United

Nations forces under the command of United States Army General Douglas MacArthur executed perhaps the most innovative and successful amphibious counterattack in world history at the port of Incheon on September 15, 1950, resulting in United Nations forces gaining the offensive and pushing the DPRK forces north of the 38th parallel towards the Yalu River along the border with China; and

WHEREAS, Units of the California National Guard were activated for the conflict, including, on August 21, 1950, the 719th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Gun Battalion, which was ordered into active duty for service in Korea, with this recently racially desegregated unit being followed on September 11, 1950, by the 1401st and 1402nd Engineer Combat Battalions, which were still segregated; and

WHEREAS, The 719th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Gun Battalion was returned to California state control from active federal military service on April 14, 1952, and the 1401st and 1402nd Engineer Combat Battalions were returned to state control from active federal service on January 17, 1955, 18 months after the armistice, as fully desegregated units; and

WHEREAS, On September 1, 1950, the California National Guard's 40th Infantry Division was again called into active federal service. Departing out of Oakland Army Base and Fort Mason in San Francisco in late March 1951, the division deployed to Japan for occupation duty and combat training, including nine months of participation in amphibious, air transportability, and live fire training from Mount Fuji to Sendai; and

WHEREAS, On October 10, 1950, the California National Guard's 196th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, along with two other National Guard squadrons from Florida and Georgia, were federalized and formed the 116th Fighter-Bomber Wing at George Air Force Base, Victorville, California; and

WHEREAS, On October 14, 1950, three Chinese field armies supported by aircraft from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics crossed the Yalu River and engaged the United Nations forces on October 25, 1950; and

WHEREAS, On November 27, 1950, four Chinese field armies attacked the 1st Marine and 7th Infantry Divisions at the Chosin Reservoir, leading to a historic battle that resulted in the destruction of 10 Chinese Infantry Divisions and the successful breakout and withdrawal by sea of American forces that concluded on December 24, 1950; and

WHEREAS, On July 10, 1951, the 196th Fighter-Bomber Squadron departed San Diego on the aircraft carrier USS Windham Bay with its 18 F-84E "Thunderjet" fighter-bombers, arriving at Yokosuka Naval Base on July 24, 1951; the squadron commenced combat operations from Taegu Air Base, ROK, on December 28, 1951, and on June 10, 1952, the squadron stood down and was relieved of its assignment, returning to California and reforming at the Ontario Municipal Airport in January 1953; and

WHEREAS, On December 23, 1951, the 40th Infantry Division received alert orders to move to Korea, where, in February 1951, it relieved the 24th Infantry Division and subsequently participated in the battles of Sandbag Castle, the Punchbowl, and Heartbreak Ridge; the division suffered 376

soldiers killed in action and 1457 wounded, earning the ROK Presidential Unit Citation and three individual Medals of Honor; and

WHEREAS, On July 27, 1953, a ceasefire between the United Nations and the DPRK took effect. Although over 53,000 ROK and United Nations troops, including more than 8,000 Americans, remain missing in action; and

WHEREAS, With a state of war still existing between the United Nations and the DPRK, the California Army and Air National Guard continue in the active defense of the ROK by participating in Team Spirit exercises, which ensures tactical and logistical interoperability between the respective Armed Forces of the United States and the ROK in the event that major combat operations or other emergencies occur in the future; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature urges Californians to observe the anniversary of the Korean War Armistice Day and hereby proclaims July 27, 2013, as Korean War Armistice Day, calling upon all Californians to observe this with appropriate ceremonies and activities that honor and give thanks to our distinguished Korean War veterans; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature urges Governor Jerry Brown to proclaim July 27, 2013, as Korean War Armistice Day and instruct all state departments, agencies, interest groups, organizations, and individuals to fly the flag of the United States at half-mast on July 27, 2013, in memory of the Californians who died as a result of their service in Korea; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to the Military Department, and to the author for appropriate distribution.